Saskatchewan
Advisory Council
on the Status
of Women

Annual Report

for the fiscal year
ended March 31, 1986

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Terry Newman, Chairperson of the Saskatchewan Advisory Council on the Status of Women

Chairperson's Transmittal Letter

Honourable Patricia A. Smith
Minister Responsible for the
Status of Women
Room 361, Legislative Building
Regina, Saskatchewan

Dear Minister:

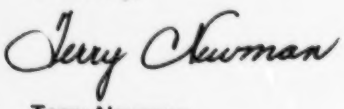
I am pleased to submit to you this Annual Report of the Saskatchewan Advisory Council on the Status of Women for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1986.

On behalf of the members of the Council, I wish to thank you for your help and co-operation during the past year. We have also appreciated the support and assistance provided by the Women's Secretariat.

Council members have found this year to be demanding on their time and resources; nevertheless, we feel a sense of accomplishment in knowing that our efforts are advancing the status of women in Saskatchewan. I would also like to express my appreciation to all members of the Advisory Council for their dedication and hard work.

The Advisory Council looks forward to another productive year in 1986-87.

Sincerely,



Terry Newman
Chairperson

The Saskatchewan Advisory Council on the Status of Women

Government-Appointed Group

The Advisory Council is a group of private citizens appointed by the provincial government to provide input and recommendations on issues related to the status of women. Saskatchewan has had an Advisory Council since 1974.

Membership

The present Council has 16 members who were appointed in November, 1983, for a three-year term. In 1983, for the first time, representatives of major women's groups were consulted to provide nominees for the Advisory Council. Members come from various fields of expertise and from different geographical regions of the province, reflecting the wide range of views and the diversity of Saskatchewan.

Role and Mandate

The Council is an advisory body to the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women, the Honourable Patricia A. Smith. The Advisory Council offers the government independent advice, direction and recommendations for improving the status of women in Saskatchewan.

Council activities include:

- Receiving presentations and suggestions from the public about status-of-women matters
- Raising public awareness of women's issues by participating in public hearings and conferences
- Conducting research on important issues
- Proposing strategies, legislation and procedures to promote equal opportunity for women

The Year's Accomplishments and Recommendations

Problems of the Adolescent Female

One of the major concerns of all Canadians is ensuring a bright future for our young people. In particular, young females face a number of challenges related to making career choices and the changing expectations of Canadian society.

During 1985-86, the Saskatchewan Advisory Council on the Status of Women focused its attention on several aspects of the future facing adolescent females. The Council's findings indicate that adolescent females do not always develop realistic expectations or career plans for their future.

The Council prepared a number of recommendations that have been forwarded to the Minister.

The Advisory Council's research on problems facing the adolescent female included a study of the on-going tragedy of unwanted pregnancies among teenagers. A special Advisory Council committee formulated recommendations for implementing school sex education programs, and these have been presented to the Minister.

Enforcement of Maintenance Programs

The Advisory Council brought to the government's attention the Council's concerns about the problems of collecting court-ordered maintenance payments and requested that the problem be investigated. Since making the recommendation, the Council has been closely following the government's enforcement of maintenance program.

Representation of Women on Boards and Commissions

There are many provincial boards, councils and commissions whose members are private citizens appointed by the government. Membership provides an opportunity to participate in the decision-making process of our democratic system.

Historically, the number of women on these boards has been low. In an effort to increase the representation of women, the Saskatchewan Advisory Council has conducted a campaign to encourage interested women to complete and submit special resume forms listing details of their interests, skills and experience. These forms are retained in a resource file which is consulted to identify potential candidates.

Matrimonial Property Act

The Council has closely followed the progress of the Law Reform Commission's proposed changes to the Matrimonial Property Act. In consultations with the provincial government, the Council has sought to protect the provisions of the present act which respects the concept of marriage as an equal partnership.

Homemakers' Pensions

An Advisory Council committee studying elderly women and poverty found that the structure of the current pension system does not serve women's needs. Women who are homemakers or who work part-time or for small businesses do not have the opportunity to participate in employer-sponsored pension plans. For this reason, many women are not well provided for in their later years. The Advisory Council has recommended that a mechanism be established to actively encourage spousal pension schemes with contributions being recognized as tax deductions for either spouse.

Child Care

The Council supports the principle that parents are primarily responsible for the care and upbringing of their children, and at the same time the Council recognizes that parents may need outside help and support in childrearing. As a result of an analysis of the need, type and availability of child care in Saskatchewan, the Council concluded that there is a need for more child care spaces. The Council found that rural areas, in particular, are not well served by the present system.

The Council proposed a number of alternatives for addressing the problem of child care in rural and urban areas. The alternatives included:

- Increased child tax credits to provide a cash refund for families
- Increased number of child care spaces targeted to specific needs of particular groups
- Increased subsidies to established day care centres
- The concept of a Saskatchewan child allowance to allow families flexibility for child care as wanted or needed

Presently, subsidy payments are restricted to licensed day care centres and family day care homes. The Advisory Council recommends that subsidies also be available for other types of child care situations. The removal of the restriction would benefit not only day care users but also day care providers. Many of the providers are women who, by operating a family day care, are able to remain at home while still bringing in some income.

The Needs of Female Cancer Patients

The Council focused attention on the treatment and care of cancer patients in Saskatchewan, of whom a large percentage are women. Of particular concern to the Council was the inequity of treatment between female patients suffering from breast cancer and the male patient who has testicular cancer. While the testicular cancer patient may receive a prosthesis at no charge because it is implanted, the victim of breast cancer has to pay for her prosthesis if it is not implanted. The Council recommended to the government that external breast prosthesis be eligible for health care coverage.

The Council also recommended that there be more trained personnel to help fit prostheses for women who have breast cancer. In 1985, the only experts in this field were at the Wascana Hospital in Regina; these facilities are not readily available to women in the northern part of the province.

The Council also called on the government to develop a more intensive educational program, with emphasis on:

- Smoking and Pregnancy - the effects of smoking on the fetus, as well as the mother, must be widely-publicized, especially among teenage mothers.
- Smoking and the Pill - the combined effects of smoking and the contraceptive pill can be serious, causing strokes and heart attacks among a certain group of relatively young women.
- Smoke-Free Schools - in the same way that alcohol is banned in schools, it is suggested that legislation be introduced to ban smoking in all elementary and secondary schools in the province.
- Eating Habits - as more information becomes available about the role that diet plays in the fight against cancer, these findings should be published. At the present time, studies indicate that a reduction of fat intake from 40% to 30% of the total calories, an increase in fibre content, and a reduction in the intake of foods preserved by salt or smoke are significant ways in which people can prevent many cancers.

Other Recommendations

The Council also recommended the following:

- That women should be given more support to capitalize on their abilities and willingness to work hard. Women entrepreneurs should be provided legal aid, management advice, encouragement and, particularly, access to credit.

- That women should have the opportunity to be financially independent. Women should not be restricted in their choices by financial limitations whether due to a lack of credit, dependency on social assistance or dependency in other circumstances.

- That the government should continue to provide education, training and support programs targeted for women on social assistance.

- That Affirmative Action should be changed in name to enhance its acceptance as a strategy to provide women and other target groups with increased employment opportunities.

- That the government should carefully monitor the impact of technological change in the workplace.

- That the government should look at methods to encourage girls to develop skills in mathematics, science and technology.

Other Areas of Study

- Education and the Adolescent Girl
- Equality Rights
- Implications of Affirmative Action
- Sex Education and Youth
- Government and the Abortion Issue
- Profile of Teenage Pregnancy in Saskatchewan
- Changes to Unemployment Insurance Coverage
- Enforcement of Maintenance Orders
- Violence Against Women

The Year's Activities

Meetings

Date	Location
April 12-13, 1985	Regina
May 24-25, 1985	Saskatoon
July 8, 1985	Regina*
July 29-31, 1985	Saskatoon
September 14, 1985	Saskatoon*
October 11-12, 1985	Regina
January 3-4, 1986	Regina
February 14, 1986	Saskatoon*

* Executive Council Meetings

Committees

During 1985-86, special Advisory Council committees focused on the following topics:

- Violence in the Home
- Sexual Abuse of Children
- Law Reform Commission's Proposed Amendments to the Matrimonial Property Act
- Representation of Women on Government-Appointed Boards and Commissions
- Technological Change
- Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value
- Enforcement of Maintenance
- Pornography
- Core Curriculum in Schools
- Sex Education Programming in Schools
- Government and the Abortion Issue
- Mastectomy—Care of Patients and Medical Insurance Coverage
- Hearings of the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission
- Child Care in Saskatchewan
- Children Having Children

Hearings and Conferences Attended

Event	Date	Location
Women and the Economy Symposium	March 17-18, 1986	Ottawa
Significance of this Decade Conference	Feb. 15, 1986	Saskatoon
Access to Education and Employment	Feb. 14-15, 1986	La Ronge
Continuing Home Care Workshop	Jan. 28, 1986	Prince Albert
Unemployment Insurance Hearings	Dec. 3-4, 1985	Regina
First Ministers' Conference on the Economy	Nov. 27-29, 1985	Halifax
"Expanding Their Horizons" Planning Meeting	Nov. 27, 1985	Saskatoon
Joint Meeting of Federal/ Provincial/Territorial Advisory Councils on the Status of Women	Nov. 18-19, 1985	Ottawa
Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation Women in Education Workshop	Nov. 16, 1985	Saskatoon
The Decade of Women; Looking Back, Moving Forward Conference	Nov. 15-16, 1985	Halifax

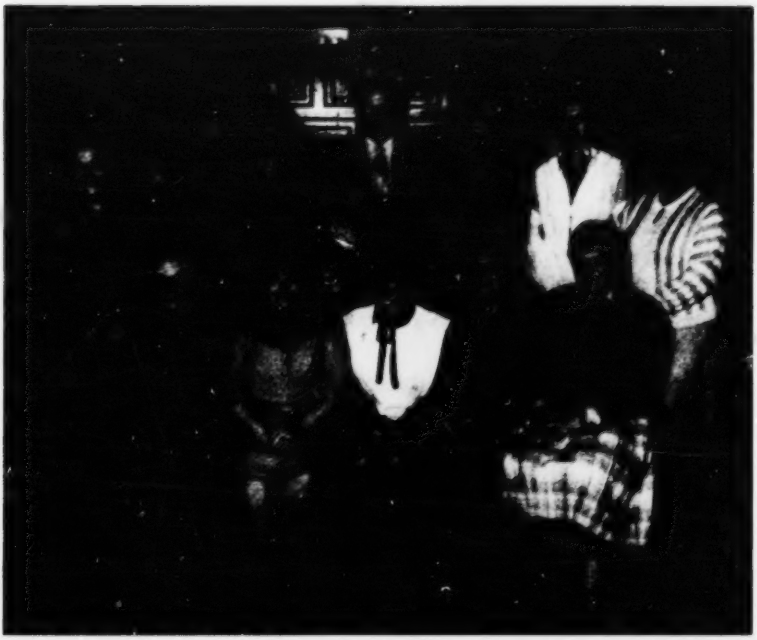
Event	Date	Location
Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women Conference, "Women: Social and Physical Isolation"	Nov. 8-10, 1985	Saskatoon
Saskatchewan Bingo Inquiry	Oct. 29-30, 1985	Prince Albert & Saskatoon
"Women and the Business World '85" Conference	Oct. 24-26, 1985	Saskatoon
"Youth and Sexuality" Conference	Oct. 18-19, 1985	Saskatoon
Consultation Meeting with Cabinet	Oct. 10, 1985	Regina
Child Abuse Workshop	Oct. 7-8, 1985	Regina
Widows and Those Associated with Widows	Sept. 28, 1985	Saskatoon
Badgely and Fraser Report Recommendations Hearing	Sept. 23, 1985	Regina
Joint Advisory Council Symposium	Sept. 3-4, 1985	Ottawa
"Making the Link — Getting Girls into Science" Workshop	July 30, 1985	Saskatoon

Event	Date	Location
Cancer Society — Women and Cancer Treatment Workshop	July 30, 1985	Saskatoon
Group Think — Adolescent Women Workshop	July 31, 1985	Saskatoon
Women and Business Conference	June 11-12, 1985	Regina
Federal/Provincial/ Territorial Meeting of Ministers Responsible for the Status of Women	June 6-7, 1985	Winnipeg
Core Curriculum Conference	May 26-28, 1985	Fort San
Adolescent Female Workshop	May 25, 1985	Saskatoon

Summary of Recommendations

- That the government look at methods to encourage girls to develop skills in mathematics, science and technology.
- That the problems of collecting court-ordered maintenance payments be investigated.
- That provisions of the Matrimonial Property Act be protected with respect to the concept of marriage as an equal partnership.
- That a mechanism be established to actively encourage spousal pension schemes with contributions being recognized as tax deductions for either spouse.
- That subsidy payments be available for all types of child care situations.
- That the number of child care spaces in the province be increased.
- That external breast prostheses be eligible for health care coverage.
- That there be more trained personnel to fit prostheses for women who have breast cancer.
- That an intensive educational program be developed to emphasize: the effects of smoking on the fetus; the combined effects of smoking and the pill on the fetus; the need for smoke-free schools, and the role diet plays in fighting cancer.
- That women entrepreneurs be provided management advice, encouragement, legal advice, and access to credit.
- That women should have the opportunity to be financially independent.
- That the government should continue to provide education, training and support programs targeted at women on social assistance.
- That the name of Affirmative Action programs should be changed to enhance their acceptance.
- That the government should monitor the impact of technological change in the workplace.

Advisory Council Members



Back frow from left: Fern Foster, Ivy Scales, Jenny Baillie, Clare Gitzel, Darla Hunter, Dorlas Young, Estelle Matthews. Front row from left: Ivy McVicar, Earlia Folbar, Terry Newman, Eileen Lillico, Mary Muir. Missing from photo are: Joan Bens, Cornell Beuker, Dr. Betty Kissoon, Dr. Bill Prentice.

Public Consultation

Members of the Advisory Council invite Saskatchewan residents to write or phone with suggestions for increasing opportunities for women in Saskatchewan. Council members are available as speakers at club or association meetings throughout the province.

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